

## IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claim will replace all prior versions and listings of claim in the present application.

### Listing of Claims

AI 1. (currently amended) A method of data transfer in a hierarchical ~~network~~ computer system, comprising the steps of:

receiving first data including an item from an upper system;

updating attribute information corresponding to said item held in a current system and adding second data held in said current system to said first data, said attribute information indicating a hierarchical relationship of the system by which said item is managed; and

sending said first data and said second data to a lower system.

2. (original) The method of data transfer as claimed in claim 1, further comprising the steps of:

if said item included in said received first data exists in said current system, updating said existing item;

changing attribute information for said item held in said current system to a value indicative of common data;

if said item does not exist in said current system, adding said item to said current system; and

changing said attribute information for said item held in said current system to a value indicative of data which is prepared by said upper system.

3. (original) The method of data transfer as claimed in claim 1, still further comprising the steps of:

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receiving at least one of edit requirements for addition and deletion of said item;  
and

changing attribute information for said item held in said current system according to the change of said item and item content of said current system corresponding to said item.

4. (currently amended) A method of data transfer in a hierarchical network computer system, comprising the steps of:

receiving an item and data stored in first data coming from a lower system;

if said item exists in a database of said current system and attribute information corresponding to said item indicates a value managed by an upper system, reading data included in said first data and storing the read data into second data, said attribute information indicating hierarchical relationship of the system by which said item is managed; and

sending said second data to said upper system.

5. (original) The method of data transfer as claimed in claim 4, wherein, if said attribute information corresponding to said item indicates a value not managed by said upper system, said data is stored in said current system.

AI 6. (original) The method of data transfer as claimed in claim 1, wherein said first data includes an operation flag indicative of either one of item addition or item deletion, and addition of said item to said current system is determined on the basis of said operation flag and information indicative of existence or absence of said item in said current system.

7. (original) The method of data transfer as claimed in claim 1, wherein said second data holds manager system information indicative of that said item is the data associated with said current system and whether said item is processed or not is determined on the basis of said manager system information.

8. (original) A method of data transfer in a hierarchical ~~network~~ computer system comprising the steps of:

receiving from a lower system an item and data included in first data and manager system information indicative of whether said item is the data associated with a current system;

if said manager system information is the data associated with said current system, updating a content of an item held in said current system by use of said data, said content indicating a hierarchical relationship of the system by which said item is managed;

if said manager system information has information indicative of another system, deleting the information indicative of said current system;

forming second data by said item, said data, and the manager system

information with the information indicative of said current system deleted; and  
sending said second data to an upper system.

A) 9. (original) A method of data transfer in a hierarchical network comprising the steps of:  
receiving first data from a lower system;  
forming second data by an item corresponding to default information held in a current system and data included in said first data; and  
sending said second data to an upper system.

10. (original) A method of data transfer in a hierarchical network comprising the steps of:  
receiving first data from an upper system;  
storing into a current system an item included in said first data, said item corresponding to default information held in said current system;  
storing data with said item corresponding to said default information of said current system deleted from said first data into second data; and  
sending said second data to a lower system.

11. (original) The method of data transfer as claimed in claim 10, wherein data to be sent to said upper system forms said second data when there is no more data to be sent to said lower system after deleting said item corresponding to said default information of said current system from said first data and said second

data is sent to said upper system.

12. (currently amended) A data transfer apparatus for use in a hierarchical ~~network-computer system, comprising:~~

A) a receiving block for receiving first data including an item from an upper system;

a merge processing block for updating attribute information corresponding to said item and held in a current system and adding second data held in said current system to said first data, said attribute information indicating a hierarchical relationship of the system by which said item is managed; and

a sending block for sending said first data and said second data to a lower system.

13. (original) The data transfer apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein said merge processing block updates said existing item, if said item included in said received first data exists in said current system; changes attribute information for said item held in said current system to a value indicative of common data; adds said item to said current system, if said item does not exist in said current system; and changes said attribute information for said item held in said current system to a value indicative of data which is prepared by said upper system.

14. (original) The data transfer apparatus as claimed in claim 12, further comprising:

an edit processing block for receiving at least one of edit requirements for

addition and deletion of said item and changing attribute information for said item held in current system according to the change of said item and item content of said current system corresponding to said item.

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15. (currently amended) A data transfer apparatus for use in a hierarchical network-computer system, comprising:

a receiving block for receiving an item and data stored in first data coming from a lower system;

an update processing block for, if said item exists in a database of a current system and attribute information corresponding to said item indicates a value managed by an upper system, reading said data included in said first data and storing the read data into second data, said attribute information indicating a hierarchical relationship of the system by which said item is managed; and

a sending block for sending said second data to said upper system.

16. (original) The data transfer apparatus as claimed in claim 15, wherein, if said attribute information corresponding to said item is a value indicative of common manager item, said updating processing block stores said data into said current system.

17. (original) The data transfer apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein said first data includes an operation flag indicative of either one of item addition or item deletion, and said merge processing block determines whether or

not to add said item to said current system on the basis of said operation flag.

A1 18. (original) The data transfer apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein said second data holds manager system information indicating that said item is data associated with said current system and said merge processing block determines whether or not to process said item on the basis of said manager system information.

19. (original) A recording medium readable by a computer storing a program for executing the data transfer method cited in claim 1.

20. (original) A recording medium readable by a computer storing a program for executing the data transfer method cited in claim 2.

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A2 21. (new) A method of data transfer in a hierarchical computer system, said computer system including a plurality of computers, comprising the steps of:  
holding items of information to be managed and attribute information corresponding to said items in each of said computers, said attribute information indicating a hierarchical relationship of the system by which said item is managed;  
determining whether or not response result from a lower computer for information acquisition requirement related to item of said managed information is transferred to a upper computer according to said attribute information;

A2 when said information acquisition requirement is issued from an upper computer to a lower computer via a current computer, receiving by said current computer data including items of information managed by said upper computer;

when items of information managed by said current computer exist in items, included in said data, of information managed by said upper computer, updating attribute information corresponding to items, included in said data, of information managed by said upper computer from a first value indicative that said item is managed by said current computer to a second value indicative that said item is a common item common to said upper computer and said current computer;

when items of information managed by said current computer do not exist in items, included in said data, of information managed by said upper computer, adding items of information managed by said current computer to said data; and

sending, to said lower computer, information acquisition requirement including data that items of information managed by said current computer are added to said data.

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